

News Summary

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International

A reduction in the strategic arsenals of the United States and the Soviet Union and a cutback in conventional arms around the world will be proposed by Secretary of State Cyrus R. Vance at a meeting next month with Soviet leaders. He spoke about the forthcoming meeting in an interview, in which he also said that it would be constructive for the United States and Cuba to discuss their differences. [Page A1, Col. 6.]

The United States indicated that it would welcome discussions with Cuba about the imperiled antihijacking agreement and other issues in the way of normal relations between the two countries. [A6:1.]

Ethiopia's chief of state, Brig. Gen. Tafari Banti, was killed in a gun battle that broke out around the Addis Ababa headquarters of the country's feuding military leaders, and seven members of the governing council reportedly were "executed" by the victors. The radio made a point of announcing that Lieut. Col. Mengistu Haile-Mariam, the council's first vice chairman, was safe [A1:5.]

Xenophobia is sweeping Benin in the aftermath of a mysterious and ineffectual invasion Jan. 16 by about 100 armed men. The invasion might have been an attempt to bring down the militant leftist government of President Mathieu Kerekou or a plot by the Government to bolster its waning prestige among Benin's people. Now squads of soldiers, dispatched by the People's Democratic Party, are making house-to-house searches for "imperialists and colonialists." White foreigners are arrested on sight. About half of the mysterious invasion force was said to be white. [A1:5-6.]

President Suharto of Indonesia ordered an investigation of bribery and kickback charges involving Indonesia's \$161 million satellite-communications network that links the 3,200-mile-long

chain of Indonesian islands. This is another embarrassment for President Suharto, who is preparing an election campaign. On Wednesday, the Securities and Exchange Commission in Washington accused a former head of the Indonesian state oil company of directing a shakedown of dozens of United States corporations. [A1:1-2.]

National

Arthur F. Burns, the Federal Reserve Board's chairman, told the House Banking Committee that he disagreed with the timing and size of President Carter's economic stimulus program. He said that he believed the economy was "improving on its own," and that it was not clear that "any stimulus is needed at all." He was especially critical of the Administration's proposal to give a \$50 tax rebate to most people. He said "the Treasury does not have the money." [A1:1.]

Metropolitan

Rejection of a proposed contract between the New York City Board of Education and its 55,000 teachers and other personnel was recommended by Stephen Berger, executive director of the Emergency Financial Control Board. Mr. Berger and Sidney Schwartz, the special deputy state comptroller, said their opposition was based on their belief that the contract violated the Control Board's wage-freeze guidelines and that the contract's costs were excessive compared to what other city unions had won [A1:2-3.]

Severe cold and related energy problems have put 750,000 people in New York State out of work, according to an estimate by the state's Labor Department. A potential new drain of more than \$30 million a week from unemployment insurance funds was forecast by the agency if an expected 350,000 eligibles put in claims. New Jersey's Labor Department reported 52,200 applications for such benefits

from last Saturday through yesterday, nearly 50,000 more than normal. [A1:4.]

Mayor Beame announced the appointment of New York City's first Director of Operations. He is Lee P. Oberst, a New York Telephone Company vice president and chief troubleshooter. He will be responsible for planning, managing and maintaining operations of municipal services. Mayor Beame said his Management Advisory Board had recommended that the post of Director of Operations be established. Mr. Oberst will be on loan to the city for a year and will continue to be paid his \$120,000 yearly salary by the telephone company. [D12:5-6.]

Business/Finance

More natural gas will be piped from the Southwest to New York and other Eastern markets under an order by Richard L. Dunham, chairman of the Federal Power Commission, who made first use of the emergency energy powers signed into law Wednesday night by President Carter. [D1:6.]

A feeling was growing in the natural-gas industry that President Carter's emergency gas bill would not provide substantial help. [D1:3-5.]

The largest retail chains reported strong sales gains in January over the same month last year, despite the extreme cold. The series of healthy reports was led by Sears, Roebuck, which had a 14.1 percent rise over January 1976, its best monthly gain since July 1973. The increase would have been 1.4 percentage points higher if the weather had been better, Arthur M. Wood, Sear's chairman, said. [D1:1-2.]

The Dow Jones industrial average declined to its lowest level in two months, 5.65 points to 947.14. It was below the 950-960 band regarded by technical analysts as an area of support for stock prices. [D1:1-2.] Credit markets made their first big advance of 1977, apparently cheered by Arthur Burns's testimony in Congress on the economy, and President Carter's television talk Wednesday night. The Treasury, meanwhile, sold \$2 billion of seven-year notes at an average interest rate of 7.25 percent. [D2:1.] Soybean futures closed up 13 cents a bushel, their best increase in 10 days. Prices of other futures also were higher. [D11:4.]

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Quotation of the Day

"We cannot go on spending £170 for every 100 we are earning."—President Anwar el-Sadat of Egypt, in an address to the nation. [A4:4.]

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CORRECTION

A dispatch by United Press International from Addis Ababa printed in The Times Wednesday incorrectly identified a granddaughter of the late Emperor Haile Selassie. The granddaughter, who died Monday after abdominal surgery, was Ejigayehue Asfa Wossen, eldest daughter of Crown Prince Asfa Wossen.